105226 posts have been identified for abolition and around 42723 posts have been identified to be filled up, as a result of these instructions.

Curtailing of interest rates on EPF

†2588. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have declared 9.5 per cent interest on EPF for the financial years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons for curtailing the interest rate for the financial year 2004-05, inspite of giving approval of 9.5 per cent interest?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO): (a) and (b) Under Para 60(1) of the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme, 1952, the Central Government has approved the crediting of interest to the member's account for the years as detailed below:

Year	Rate of Interest
2002-03	9.5%
2003-04	9.0% + 0.5% bonus interest
2004-05	9.5%

(c) Does not arise, in view of (a) and (b) above.

Unclaimed deposits with Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)

2589. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the total amount lying unclaimed with the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) classified as Unclaimed Deposits (UCDs);

(b) the reasons for this unclaimed deposits; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to find out the members whose fund has been lying unclaimed?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO): (a) The amount lying in the Unclaimed Deposit Account as on 31.03.2004 was Rs. 942.95 crore.

(b) The reasons responsible for Unclaimed Deposits are:

- Non-availability of the latest address of the employees.
- Non-submission of claims for transfer/final settlement.
- Multiple accounts of a member.
- Desire to earn more returns as Provident Fund accumulations earn better interest compared to the market.
- Outstanding balance in the Provident Fund account cannot be attached by any authority or decree of a court.
- The interest earned on it is exempt from the Income Tax.

(c) Advertisements were issued in major daily news papers and all Regional Provident Fund Commissioners were directed to launch a drive for finding out the latest addresses of the claimants from their establishment and to settle their claims. Consequent upon the special drive Rs. 86.60 crore has been paid out of the Unclaimed Deposit Account during the year 2004-05.

Unlicensed employment agencies

2590. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that in four metro cities of India, members of unlicensed agency houses are operating as employment agencies;

(b) whether it is a fact that agency houses are luring teenage girls from poor families and throwing them to all sorts of exploitations; and

(c) whether Government have any proposal to regulate these agencies?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRA SEKHAR RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No such complaints have been reported to government.